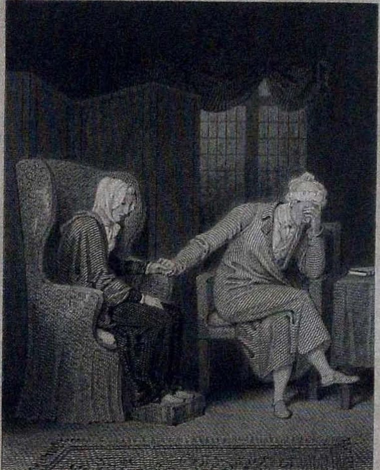
THE

MINOR POEMS

OF

WILLIAM COWPER

OF THE INNER TEMPLE.



R.Westall R.A. del.t J.H.Robinson sc.

Thy hands their little force resign
Yet gently press'd, press gently mine.
My Mary.

LONDON.

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1818.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IN the present edition of the MINOR POEMS OF COWPER, it will be perceived that some regard has been paid, both to selection and classification. The whole of the Poems hitherto arbitrarily distributed at the end of the first two volumes, with the exception of the Translations and the Latin Poems, together with a copious selection from his POSTHUMOUS POETRY, (which from its bulk, seems to have been received with less favour by the public than was expected,) are included in this arrangement. The rejected pieces, though they might deserve insertion in a biographical memoir, as illustrative of the Author's character, did not, for the most part, appear to the Editor

worthy of permanently occupying a place among the productions of the Poet. The Translations are omitted for a different reason; as belonging, together with the Homer, to a distinct portion of Cowper's Works. An exception has, however, been made in favour of the elegant Versions of VINCENT BOURNE'S Poems, of which the entire collection will be found in the present volume.

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MINOR POEMS.

PART I.

YARDLEY OAK.

[1791.]

Survivor sole, and hardly such, of all
That once liv'd here, thy brethren, at my birth,
(Since which I number threescore winters past)
A shatter'd vet'ran, hollow-trunk'd perhaps,
As now, and with excoriate forks deform,
Relics of ages! Could a mind, imbued
With truth from Heaven, created thing adore,
I might with rev'rence kneel, and worship thee.
It seems idolatry with some excuse,
When our forefather Druids in their oaks
Imagined sanctity. The conscience, yet
Unpurified by an authentic act
Of amnesty, the meed of blood divine,
Lov'd not the light, but, gloomy, into gloom
Of thickest shades, like Adam after taste
Of fruit proscrib'd, as to a refuge, fled.

Thou wast a bauble once; a cup and ball,
Which babes might play with; and the thievish jay,
Seeking her food, with ease might have purloin'd
The auburn nut that held thee, swallowing down
Thy yet close-folded latitude of boughs
And all thine embryo vastness at a gulp.
But Fate thy growth decreed; autumnal rains
Beneath thy parent tree mellow'd the soil
Design'd thy cradle; and a skipping deer,
With pointed hoof dibbling the glebe, prepar'd
The soft receptacle, in which, secure,
Thy rudiments should sleep the winter through.
So Fancy dreams. Disprove it, if ye can,
Ye reas'ners broad awake, whose busy search
Of argument, employ'd too oft amiss,
Sifts half the pleasures of short life away!
Thou fell'st mature; and in the loamy clod
Swelling with vegatative force instinct
Didst burst thine egg, as theirs the fabled Twins,
Now stars; two lobes, protruding, pair'd exact;
A leaf succeeded, and another leaf,
And, all the elements thy puny growth
Fost'ring propitious, thou becam'st a twig.
Who liv'd, when thou wast such? Oh, couldst thou
As in Dodona once thy kindred trees [speak,
Oracular, I would not curious ask
The future, best unknown, but at thy mouth
Inquisitive, the less ambiguous past.
By thee I might correct, erroneous oft,
The clock of history, facts and events

Timing more punctual, unrecorded facts
Recov'ring, and mistated setting right—
Desp'rate attempt, till trees shall speak again!
Time made thee what thou wast, king of the woods;
And Time hath made thee what thou art—a cave
For owls to roost in. Once thy spreading boughs
O'erhung the champaign; and the num'rous flocks,
That graz'd it, stood beneath that ample cope
Uncrowded, yet safe-shelter'd from the storm.
No flock frequents thee now. Thou hast out-liv'd
Thy popularity, and art become
(Unless verse rescue thee awhile) a thing
Forgotten, as the foliage of thy youth.
While thus through all the stages thou hast push'd
Of treeship—first a seedling, hid in grass;
Then twig; then sapling; and, as cent'ry roll'd
Slow after century, a giant-bulk
Of girth enormous, with moss-cushion'd root
Upheav'd above the soil, and sides emboss'd
With prominent wens globose—till at the last
The rottenness, which time is charg'd to inflict
On other mighty ones, found also thee.
What exhibitions various hath the world
Witness'd of mutability in all
That we account most durable below!
Change is the diet, on which all subsist,
Created changeable, and change at last
Destroys them. Skies uncertain now the heat
Transmitting cloudless, and the solar beam
Now quenching in a boundless sea of clouds—

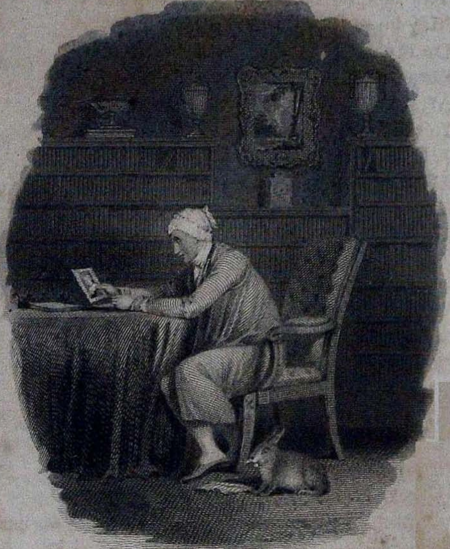
Calm and alternate storm, moisture and drought,
Invigorate by turns the springs of life
In all that live, plant, animal, and man,
And in conclusion mar them. Nature's threads,
Fine passing thought, e'en in her coarsest works,
Delight in agitation, yet sustain,
The force, that agitates, not unimpair'd;
But, worn by frequent impulse, to the cause
Of their best tone their dissolution owe.
Thought cannot spend itself, comparing still
The great and little of thy lot, thy growth
From almost nullity into a state
Of matchless grandeur, and declension thence,
Slow, into such magnificent decay.
Time was, when, settling on thy leaf, a fly
Could shake thee to the root—and time has been
When tempests could not. At thy firmest age
Thou hadst within thy bole solid contents,
That might have ribb'd the sides and plank'd the deck
Of some flagg'd admiral; and tortuous arms,
The shipwright's darling treasure, didst present
To the four-quarter'd winds, robust and bold,
Warp'd into tough knee-timber, many a load!*
But the axe spar'd thee. In those thriftier days
Oaks fell not, hewn by thousands, to supply
The bottomless demands of contest, wag'd
For senatorial honours. Thus to Time

* Knee-timber is found in the crooked arms of oak, which, by reason of their distortion, are easily adjusted to the angle formed where the deck and the ship's sides meet.

The task was left to whittle thee away
With his sly scythe, whose ever-nibbling edge,
Noiseless, an atom, and an atom more,
Disjoining from the rest, has, unobserv'd,
Achiev'd a labour, which had far and wide,
By man perform'd, made all the forest ring.
Embowell'd now, and of thy ancient self
Possessing nought but the scoop'd rind, that seems
An huge throat, calling to the clouds for drink,
Which it would give in rivulets to thy root,
Thou temptest none, but rather much forbidd'st
The feller's toil, which thou couldst ill requite.
Yet is thy root sincere, sound as the rock,
A quarry of stout spurs, and knotted fangs,
Which, crook'd into a thousand whimsies, clasp
The stubborn soil, and hold thee still erect.
So stands a kingdom, whose foundation yet
Fails not, in virtue and in wisdom laid,
Though all the superstructure, by the tooth
Pulveriz'd of venality, a shell
Stands now, and semblance only of itself!
Thine arms have left thee. Winds have rent them off
Long since, and rovers of the forest wild
With bow and shaft, have burnt them. Some have left
A splinter'd stump, bleach'd to a snowy white;
And some, memorial none, where once they grew.
Yet life still lingers in thee, and puts forth
Proof not contemptible of what she can,
Even where death predominates. The spring
Finds thee not less alive to her sweet force,

Than yonder upstarts of the neighb'ring wood,
So much thy juniors, who their birth receiv'd
Half a millenium since the date of thine.
But since, although well qualified by age
To teach, no spirit dwells in thee, nor voice
May be expected from thee, seated here
On thy distorted root, with hearers none,
Or prompter, save the scene, I will perform
Myself the oracle, and will discourse
In my own ear such matter as I may.
One man alone, the father of us all,
Drew not his life from woman; never gaz'd,
With mute unconsciousness of what he saw,
On all around him; learn'd not by degrees,
Nor ow'd articulation to his ear;
But, moulded by his Maker into man
At once, upstood intelligent, survey'd
All creatures, with precision understood
Their purport, uses, properties, assign'd
To each his name significant, and, fill'd
With love and wisdom, render'd back to Heav'n
In praise harmonious the first air he drew.
He was excus'd the penalties of dull
Minority. No tutor charg'd his hand
With the thought-tracing quill, or task'd his mind
With problems. History, not wanted yet,
Lean'd on her elbow, watching Time, whose course,
Eventful, should supply her with a theme.

ON HIS MOTHER'S PICTURE.



O that those lips had language! Life has pass'd
With me but roughly since I saw thee last.
Those lips are thine,_ thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solac'd me;___

DRAWN BY RICHARD WESTALL, R.A. ENGRAVED BY EDWARD PORTBURY:
PUBLISHED BY JOHN SHARPE, PICCADILLY,
OCT. 1. 1817.

ON THE

RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE OUT OF NORFOLK.

THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN ANNE BODHAM.

O THAT those lips had language! Life has pass'd
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
'Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!'
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes,
(Blest be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
To quench it), here shines on me still the same.
Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bidd'st me honour with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long,
I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own:
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream, that thou art she.

My mother! when I learn'd that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch ev'n then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gavest me, though unfelt, a kiss;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile! it answers—Yes.
I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such?—It was—where thou art gone
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wish'd, I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived.
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
I learn'd at last submission to my lot,
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.
Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,

Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapp'd
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet cap,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we call'd the pastoral house our own.
Short-lived possession! but the record fair
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit, or confectionary plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestow'd
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glow'd;
All this, and more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughen'd by those cataracts and breaks,
That humour interposed too often makes;
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honours to thee as my numbers may;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorn'd in heaven, though little noticed here.
Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I prick'd them into paper with a pin,
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head, and smile),

Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
I would not trust my heart—the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.—
But no—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.
  Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast,
(The storms all weather'd and the ocean cross'd),
Shoots into port at some well-haven'd isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reach'd the shore
'Where tempests never beat nor billows roar,'*
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life long since has anchor'd by thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distress'd—
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-toss'd,
Sails ripp'd, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
Yet O the thought, that thou art safe, and he!
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.

* Garth.

My boast is not, that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
The son of parents pass'd into the skies.
And now farewell—Time unrevoked has run
His wonted course, yet what I wish'd is done.
By Contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem to have lived my childhood o'er again;
To have renew'd the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine;
And, while the wings of Fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic show of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft—
Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

HEROISM.

THERE was a time when Ætna's silent fire
Slept unperceived, the mountain yet entire:
When, conscious of no danger from below,
She tower'd a cloud-capt pyramid of snow.
No thunders shook with deep intestine sound
The blooming groves that girdled her around.
Her unctuous olives, and her purple vines,
(Unfelt the fury of those bursting mines),
The peasant's hopes, and not in vain, assured,
In peace upon her sloping sides matured:
When on a day, like that of the last doom,
A conflagration labouring in her womb,
She teem'd and heaved with an infernal birth
That shook the circling seas and solid earth,
Dark and voluminous the vapours rise,
And hang their horrours in the neighbouring skies,
While through the Stygian veil that blots the day,
In dazzling streaks the vivid lightnings play.
But oh! what Muse, and in what powers of song,
Can trace the torrent as it burns along?
Havoc and devastation in the van,
It marches o'er the prostrate works of man;
Vines, olives, herbage, forests disappear,
And all the charms of a Sicilian year.

Revolving seasons, fruitless as they pass,
See it an uninform'd and idle mass;
Without a soil to invite the tiller's care,
Or blade that might redeem it from despair.
Yet Time at length (what will not time achieve?)
Clothes it with earth, and bids the produce live.

Once more the spiry myrtle crowns the glade,
And ruminating flocks enjoy the shade.
O bliss precarious, and unsafe retreats,
O charming Paradise of short-lived sweets!
The self-same gale that wafts the fragrance round,
Brings to the distant year a sullen sound:
Again the mountain feels the imprison'd foe,
Again pours ruin on the vale below.
Ten thousand swains the wasted scene deplore,
That only future ages can restore.
  Ye monarchs, whom the lure of honour draws,
Who write in blood the merits of your cause,
Who strike the blow, then plead your own defence,
Glory your aim, but justice your pretence,
Behold in Ætna's emblematic fires
The mischiefs your ambitious pride inspires!
Fast by the stream that bounds your just domain,
And tells you where ye have a right to reign,
A nation dwells, not envious of your throne,
Studious of peace, their neighbours', and their own.
Ill-fated race! how deeply must they rue
Their only crime, vicinity to you!
The trumpet sounds, your legions swarm abroad,
Through the ripe harvest lies their destined road;
At every step beneath their feet they tread
The life of multitudes, a nation's bread!
Earth seems a garden in its loveliest dress
Before them, and behind a wilderness.
Famine, and Pestilence, her first-born son,
Attend to finish what the sword begun;

And echoing praises, such as fiends might earn,
And Folly pays, resound at your return,
A calm succeeds—but Plenty, with her train
Of heart-felt joys, succeeds not soon again,
And years of pining indigence must show
What scourges are the gods that rule below.
Yet man, laborious man, by slow degrees,
(Such is his thirst of opulence and ease),
Plies all the sinews of industrious toil,
Gleans up the refuse of the general spoil,
Rebuilds the towers that smoked upon the plain,
And the sun gilds the shining spires again.
Increasing commerce and reviving art
Renew the quarrel on the conqueror's part;
And the sad lesson must be learn'd once more
That wealth within is ruin at the door.
What are ye, monarchs, laurell'd heroes, say,
But Ætnas of the suffering world ye sway?
Sweet Nature, stripp'd of her embroider'd robe,
Deplores the wasted regions of her globe;
And stands a witness at Truth's awful bar,
To prove you there destroyers as ye are.
O place me in some Heaven-protected isle,
Where Peace, and Equity, and Freedom smile;
Where no volcano pours his fiery flood,
No crested warrior dips his plume in blood;
Where Power secures what Industry has won:
Where to succeed is not to be undone;
A land that distant tyrants hate in vain,
In Britain's isle, beneath a George's reign!

FRIENDSHIP.

Amicitia nisi inter bonos esse non potest.
Cicero.

1782.

WHAT virtue, or what mental grace,
But men unqualified and base
Will boast it their possession?
Profusion apes the noble part
Of liberality of heart,
And dulness of discretion.

If every polish'd gem we find,
Illuminating heart or mind,
Provoke to imitation;
No wonder Friendship does the same,
That jewel of the purest flame,
Or rather constellation.

No knave but boldly will pretend
The requisites that form a friend,
A real and a sound one;
Nor any fool he would deceive,
But prove as ready to believe,
And dream that he had found one.

Candid, and generous, and just,
Boys care but little whom they trust,
An errour soon corrected—
For who but learns in riper years,
That man, when smoothest he appears,
Is most to be suspected?

But here again, a danger lies,
Lest, having misapplied our eyes,
And taken trash for treasure,
We should unwarily conclude
Friendship a false ideal good,
A mere Utopian pleasure.

An acquisition rather rare
Is yet no subject of despair;
Nor is it wise complaining,
If either on forbidden ground,
Or where it was not to be found,
We sought without attaining.

No friendship will abide the test,
That stands on sordid interest,
Or mean self-love erected;
Nor such as may awhile subsist
Between the sot and sensualist,
For vicious ends connected.

Who seeks a friend, should come disposed
To exhibit in full bloom disclosed
  The graces and the beauties
That form the character he seeks;
For 'tis a union that bespeaks
  Reciprocated duties.

Mutual attention is implied,
And equal truth on either side,
  And constantly supported:
'Tis senseless arrogance to accuse
Another of sinister views,
  Our own as much distorted.

But will sincerity suffice?
It is indeed above all price,
  And must be made the basis;
But every virtue of the soul
Must constitute the charming whole,
  All shining in their places.

A fretful temper will divide
The closest knot that may be tied,
  By ceaseless sharp corrosion;
A temper passionate and fierce,
May suddenly your joys disperse
  At one immense explosion.

In vain the talkative unite
In hopes of permanent delight—
The secret just committed,
Forgetting its important weight,
They drop through mere desire to prate,
And by themselves outwitted.

How bright soe'er the prospect seems,
All thoughts of friendship are but dreams,
If envy chance to creep in;
An envious man, if you succeed,
May prove a dangerous foe indeed,
But not a friend worth keeping.

As Envy pines at good possess'd,
So Jealousy looks forth distress'd
On good that seems approaching;
And, if success his steps attend,
Discerns a rival in a friend,
And hates him for encroaching.

Hence authors of illustrious name,
(Unless belied by common fame,)
Are sadly prone to quarrel,
To deem the wit a friend displays
A tax upon their own just praise,
And pluck each other's laurel.

A man renown'd for repartee
Will seldom scruple to make free
With Friendship's finest feeling,
Will thrust a dagger at your breast,
And say he wounded you in jest,
By way of balm for healing.

Whoever keeps an open ear
For tattlers, will be sure to hear
The trumpet of Contention:
Aspersion is the babbler's trade,
To listen is to lend him aid,
And rush into dissension.

A friendship that in frequent fits
Of controversial rage emits
The sparks of disputation,
Like Hand-in-Hand insurance plates,
Most unavoidably creates
The thought of conflagration.

Some fickle creatures boast a soul
True as the needle to the pole,
Their humour yet so various—
They manifest their whole life through
The needle's deviations too,
Their love is so precarious.

The great and small but rarely meet
On terms of amity complete;
  Plebeians must surrender
And yield so much to noble folk,
It is combining fire with smoke,
  Obscurity with splendour.

Some are so placid and serene,
(As Irish bogs are always green),
  They sleep secure from waking;
And are indeed a bog that bears
Your unparticipated cares
  Unmoved and without quaking.

Courtier and patriot cannot mix
Their heterogeneous politics,
  Without an effervescence,
Like that of salts with lemon juice,
Which does not yet like that produce
  A friendly coalescence.

Religion should extinguish strife,
And make a calm of human life;
  But friends that chance to differ
On points which God has left at large,
How freely will they meet and charge!
  No combatants are stiffer.

To prove at last my main intent
Needs no expense of argument,
  No cutting and contriving—
Seeking a real friend we seem
To adopt the chymist's golden dream,
  With still less hope of thriving.

Sometimes the fault is all our own,
Some blemish in due time made known
  By trespass or omission ;
Sometimes occasion brings to light
Our friend's defect long hid from sight,
  And even from suspicion.

Then judge yourself, and prove your man
As circumspectly as you can,
  And having made election,
Beware no negligence of yours,
Such as a friend but ill endures,
  Enfeeble his affection.

That secrets are a sacred trust,
That friends should be sincere and just,
  That constancy befits them,
Are observations on the case
That savour much of common-place,
  And all the world admits them.

But 'tis not timber, lead, and stone,
An architect requires alone,
To finish a fine building;
The palace were but half complete
If he could possibly forget
The carving and the gilding.

The man that hails you Tom or Jack,
And proves by thumps upon your back
How he esteems your merit,
Is such a friend, that one had need
Be very much his friend indeed,
To pardon or to bear it.

As similarity of mind,
Or something not to be defined,
First fixes our attention;
So manners decent and polite,
The same we practised at first sight,
Must save it from declension.

Some act upon this prudent plan,
'Say little, and hear all you can.'
Safe policy, but hateful—
So barren sands imbibe the shower,
But render neither fruit nor flower,
Unpleasant and ungrateful.

The man I trust, if shy to me,
Shall find me as reserved as he;
  No subterfuge or pleading
Shall win my confidence again,
I will by no means entertain
  A spy on my proceeding.

These samples—for alas! at last
These are but samples, and a taste
  Of evils yet unmention'd—
May prove the task a task indeed,
In which 'tis much if we succeed,
  However well-intention'd.

Pursue the search, and you will find
Good sense and knowledge of mankind
  To be at least expedient,
And, after summing all the rest,
Religion ruling in the breast
  A principal ingredient.

The noblest friendship ever shown,
The Saviour's history makes known,
  Though some have turn'd and turn'd it;
And whether being crazed or blind,
Or seeing with a biass'd mind,
  Have not, it seems, discern'd it.

O Friendship! if my soul forego
Thy dear delights while here below;
To mortify and grieve me,
May I myself at last appear
Unworthy, base, and insincere,
Or may my friend deceive me!

ODE TO PEACE.

COME, peace of mind, delightful guest!
Return and make thy downy nest
  Once more in this sad heart:
Nor riches I nor power pursue,
Nor hold forbidden joys in view;
  We therefore need not part.

Where wilt thou dwell, if not with me,
From avarice and ambition free,
  And pleasure's fatal wiles?
For whom, alas! dost thou prepare
The sweets that I was wont to share,
  The banquet of thy smiles?

The great, the gay, shall they partake
The heaven that thou alone canst make?
  And wilt thou quit the stream
That murmurs through the dewy mead,
The grove and the sequester'd shed,
  To be a guest with them?

For thee I panted, thee I prized,
For thee I gladly sacrificed
  Whate'er I loved before;
And shall I see thee start away,
And helpless, hopeless, hear thee say—
  Farewell! we meet no more?

BOADICEA.

AN ODE.

WHEN the British warrior queen,
  Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought, with an indignant mien,
  Counsel of her country's gods;

Sage beneath a spreading oak
  Sat the Druid, hoary chief;
Every burning word he spoke
  Full of rage, and full of grief.

Princess! if our aged eyes
  Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
'Tis because resentment ties
  All the terrours of our tongues.

Rome shall perish—write that word
  In the blood that she has spilt;
Perish, hopeless and abhorr'd,
  Deep in ruin as in guilt.

Rome, for empire far renown'd,
  Tramples on a thousand states;
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—
  Hark! the Gaul is at her gates!

Other Romans shall arise,
  Heedless of a soldier's name;
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
  Harmony the path to fame.

Then the progeny that springs
  From the forests of our land,
Arm'd with thunder, clad with wings,
  Shall a wider world command.

Regions Cæsar never knew
  Thy posterity shall sway;
Where his eagles never flew,
  None invincible as they.

Such the bard's prophetic words,
  Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending as he swept the chords
  Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,
  Felt them in her bosom glow:
Rush'd to battle, fought, and died;
  Dying hurl'd them at the foe;

Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
  Heaven awards the vengeance due;
Empire is on us bestow'd,
  Shame and ruin wait for you.

ODE TO APOLLO.

ON AN INK-GLASS ALMOST DRIED IN THE SUN.

PATRON of all those luckless brains,
  That, to the wrong side leaning,
Indite much metre with much pains,
  And little or no meaning;
Ah why, since oceans, rivers, streams,
  That water all the nations,
Pay tribute to thy glorious beams,
  In constant exhalations;
Why, stooping from the noon of day,
  Too covetous of drink,
Apollo, hast thou stolen away
  A poet's drop of ink?
Upborne into the viewless air,
  It floats a vapour now,
Impell'd through regions dense and rare,
  By all the winds that blow:
Ordain'd perhaps ere summer flies,
  Combined with millions more,
To form an Iris in the skies,
  Though black and foul before.
Illustrious drop? and happy then
  Beyond the happiest lot,
Of all that ever pass'd my pen,
  So soon to be forgot!
Phœbus, if such be thy design,
  To place it in thy bow,
Give wit, that what is left may shine
  With equal grace below.

HORACE.

BOOK II. ODE X.

Receive, dear friend, the truths I teach,
So shalt thou live beyond the reach
  Of adverse Fortune's power:
Not always tempt the distant deep,
Nor always timorously creep,
  Along the treacherous shore.

He that holds fast the golden mean,
And lives contentedly between
  The little and the great,
Feels not the wants that pinch the poor,
Nor plagues that haunt the rich man's door,
  Imbittering all his state.

The tallest pines feel most the power
Of wintry blasts; the loftiest tower
  Comes heaviest to the ground;
The bolts that spare the mountain's side,
His cloud-capt eminence divide,
  And spread the ruin round.

The well-inform'd philosopher
Rejoices with a wholesome fear,
  And hopes in spite of pain:
If Winter bellow from the north,
Soon the sweet Spring comes dancing forth,
  And Nature laughs again.

What if thine heaven be overcast?
The dark appearance will not last;
   Expect a brighter sky.
The God that strings the silver bow,
Awakes sometimes the Muses too,
   And lays his arrows by.

If hinderances obstruct thy way,
Thy magnanimity display,
   And let thy strength be seen;
But O! if Fortune fill thy sail
With more than a propitious gale,
   Take half thy canvass in.

A REFLECTION
ON
THE FOREGOING ODE.

AND is this all? Can Reason do no more
Than bid me shun the deep and dread the shore;
Sweet moralist! afloat on life's rough sea,
The Christian has an art unknown to thee.
He holds no parley with unmanly fears;
Where Duty bids he confidently steers,
Faces a thousand dangers at her call,
And, trusting in his God, surmounts them all.

THE ROSE.

This elegant Rose had I shaken it lefs,
Might have bloomed with its owner awhile;
And the tear, that is wip'd with a little addrefs,
May be follow'd perhaps with a smile.

DRAWN BY RICHARD WESTALL, R.A. ENGRAVED BY EDWARD PORTBURY.
PUBLISHED BY JOHN SHARPE, PICCADILLY.
OCT 1. 1817.

THE ROSE.

The rose had been wash'd, just wash'd in a shower,
  Which Mary to Anna convey'd,
The plentiful moisture encumber'd the flower,
  And weigh'd down its beautiful head.

The cup was all fill'd, and the leaves were all wet,
  And it seem'd, to a fanciful view,
To weep for the buds it had left with regret,
  On the flourishing bush where it grew.

I hastily seized it, unfit as it was
  For a nosegay, so dripping and drown'd,
And swinging it rudely, too rudely, alas!
  I snapp'd it, it fell to the ground.

And such, I exclaim'd, is the pitiless part
  Some act by the delicate mind,
Regardless of wringing and breaking a heart
  Already to sorrow resign'd.

This elegant rose, had I shaken it less,
  Might have bloom'd with its owner awhile,
And the tear that is wiped with a little address,
  May be follow'd perhaps by a smile.

THE WINTER NOSEGAY.

WHAT Nature, alas! has denied
  To the delicate growth of our isle,
Art has in a measure supplied,
  And Winter is deck'd with a smile.
See, Mary, what beauties I bring
  From the shelter of that sunny shed,
Where the flowers have the charms of the spring,
  Though abroad they are frozen and dead.

'Tis a bower of Arcadian sweets,
  Where Flora is still in her prime,
A fortress, to which she retreats
  From the cruel assaults of the clime.
While Earth wears a mantle of snow,
  These pinks are as fresh and as gay
As the fairest and sweetest, that blow
  On the beautiful bosom of May.

See how they have safely survived
  The frowns of a sky so severe;
Such Mary's true love, that has lived
  Through many a turbulent year.
The charms of the late-blowing rose
  Seem graced with a livelier hue,
And the winter of sorrow best shows
  The truth of a friend such as you.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

WHICH THE AUTHOR HEARD SING ON NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1792.

WHENCE is it, that amazed I hear
  From yonder wither'd spray,
This foremost morn of all the year,
  The melody of May?

And why, since thousands would be proud
  Of such a favour shown,
Am I selected from the crowd,
  To witness it alone?

Sing'st thou, sweet Philomel, to me,
  For that I also long
Have practised in the groves like thee,
  Though not like thee in song?

Or sing'st thou rather under force
  Of some divine command,
Commission'd to presage a course
  Of happier days at hand?

Thrice welcome then! for many a long
  And joyless year have I,
As thou to-day, put forth my song
  Beneath a wintry sky.

But thee no wintry skies can harm,
  Who only need'st to sing,
To make e'en January charm,
  And every season Spring.

THE POPLAR FIELD.

The poplars are fell'd, farewell to the shade,
And the whispering sound of the cool colonade:
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse in his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapsed since I last took a view
Of my favourite field, and the bank where they grew;
And now in the grass behold they are laid,
And the tree is my seat, that once lent me a shade.

The blackbird has fled to another retreat,
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat,
And the scene where his melody charm'd me before,
Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breast, and a stone at my head,
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

The change both my heart and my fancy employs,
I reflect on the frailty of man, and his joys;
Short-lived as we are, yet our pleasures, we see,
Have a still shorter date, and die sooner than we.

THE SHRUBBERY.

WRITTEN IN A TIME OF AFFLICTION.

OH, happy shades—to me unbless'd!
Friendly to peace, but not to me!
How ill the scene that offers rest,
And heart that cannot rest, agree!

This glassy stream, that spreading pine,
Those alders quivering to the breeze,
Might soothe a soul less hurt than mine,
And please, if any thing could please.

But fix'd unalterable Care
Foregoes not what she feels within,
Shows the same sadness every where,
And slights the season and the scene.

For all that pleased in wood or lawn,
While Peace possess'd these silent bowers,
Her animating smile withdrawn,
Has lost its beauties and its powers.

The saint or moralist should tread
This moss-grown alley musing slow;
They seek like me the secret shade,
But not like me to nourish wo!

Me fruitful scenes and prospects waste
Alike admonish not to roam;
These tell me of enjoyments past,
And those of sorrows yet to come.

HUMAN FRAILTY.

WEAK and irresolute is man;
The purpose of to-day,
Woven with pains into his plan,
To-morrow rends away.

The bow well bent, and smart the spring,
Vice seems already slain;
But Passion rudely snaps the string,
And it revives again.

Some foe to his upright intent
Finds out his weaker part;
Virtue engages his assent,
But Pleasure wins his heart.

'Tis here the folly of the wise
Through all his art we view;
And, while his tongue the charge denies,
His conscience owns it true.

Bound on a voyage of awful length
And dangers little known,
A stranger to superior strength,
Man vainly trusts his own.

But oars alone can ne'er prevail,
To reach the distant coast:
The breath of Heaven must swell the sail,
Or all the toil is lost.

A COMPARISON.

The lapse of time and rivers is the same,
Both speed their journey with a restless stream;
The silent pace, with which they steal away,
No wealth can bribe, no prayers persuade to stay;
Alike irrevocable both when past,
And a wide ocean swallows both at last.
Though each resemble each in every part,
A difference strikes at length the musing heart;
Streams never flow in vain; where streams abound
How laughs the land with various plenty crown'd!
But Time, that should enrich the nobler mind,
Neglected leaves a dreary waste behind.

ANOTHER.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY.

Sweet stream, that winds through yonder glade,
Apt emblem of a virtuous maid—
Silent and chaste she steals along,
Far from the world's gay busy throng;
With gentle yet prevailing force,
Intent upon her destined course:
Graceful and useful all she does,
Blessing and bless'd where'er she goes,
Pure-bosom'd as that watery glass,
And Heaven reflected in her face.

SONG ON PEACE.

Air—" *My fond shepherds of late,*" &c.

No longer I follow a sound;
  No longer a dream I pursue;
O Happiness! not to be found,
  Unattainable treasure, adieu!

I have sought thee in splendour and dress,
  In the regions of pleasure and taste;
I have sought thee, and seem'd to possess,
  But have proved thee a vision at last.

An humble ambition and hope
  The voice of true Wisdom inspires;
'Tis sufficient, if Peace be the scope
  And the summit of all our desires.

Peace may be the lot of the mind
  That seeks it in meekness and love:
But rapture and bliss are confined
  To the glorified spirits above.

THE TANJORE M... SARASWATI MAHAL.

SONG.

Air—" *The Lass of Patie's Mill.*"

When all within is peace,
  How nature seems to smile!
Delights that never cease,
  The live-long day beguile.
From morn to dewy eve,
  With open hand she showers
Fresh blessings to deceive
  And soothe the silent hours.

It is content of heart
  Gives nature power to please;
The mind that feels no smart
  Enlivens all it sees;
Can make a wintry sky
  Seem bright as smiling May,
And evening's closing eye
  As peep of early day.

The vast majestic globe,
  So beauteously array'd
In nature's various robe,
  With wondrous skill display'd,
Is to a mourner's heart
  A dreary wild at best;
It flutters to depart,
  And longs to be at rest.

ON THE

LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE.

WRITTEN WHEN THE NEWS ARRIVED,
SEPT. 1782.

To the March in Scipio.

Toll for the brave!
  The brave that are no more!
All sunk beneath the wave,
  Fast by their native shore!

Eight hundred of the brave,
  Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel,
  And laid her on her side.

A land breeze shook the shrouds,
  And she was overset;
Down went the Royal George,
  With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave!
  Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
His last sea-fight is fought;
  His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle;
  No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak;
  She ran upon no rock.

His sword was in its sheath;
  His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down,
  With twice four hundred men.

Weigh the vessel up,
  Once dreaded by our foes!
And mingle with our cup
  The tear that England owes.

Her timbers yet are sound,
  And she may float again,
Full charged with England's thunder,
  And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone,
  His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
  Shall plough the wave no more.

SONNET TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

1792.

THY country, Wilberforce, with just disdain,
Hears thee by cruel men and impious call'd
Fanatic, for thy zeal to loose the enthrall'd
From exile, public sale, and slavery's chain.
Friend of the poor, the wrong'd, the fetter-gall'd,
Fear not lest labour such as thine be vain.
Thou hast achieved a part; hast gain'd the ear
Of Britain's senate to thy glorious cause;
Hope smiles, joy springs, and tho' cold caution pause
And weave delay, the better hour is near
That shall remunerate thy toils severe
By peace for Afric, fenced with British laws.

Enjoy what thou hast won, esteem and love
From all the Just on earth, and all the Blest above.

SONNET TO HENRY COWPER, ESQ.

On his Emphatical and Interesting Delivery of the Defence of Warren Hastings, Esq. in the House of Lords.

COWPER, whose silver voice, task'd sometimes hard,
Legends prolix delivers in the ears
(Attentive when thou read'st) of England's peers,
Let verse at length yield thee thy just reward.

Thou wast not heard with drowsy disregard,
  Expending late on all that length of plea
  Thy generous powers, but silence honour'd thee,
Mute as e'er gazed on orator or bard.

Thou art not voice alone, but hast beside
  Both heart and head: and couldst with music sweet
    Of attic phrase and senatorial tone,
Like thy renown'd forefathers, far and wide
  Thy fame diffuse, praised not for utterance meet
    Of *others'* speech, but magic of *thy own.*

SONNET TO JOHN JOHNSON.

On his Presenting me with an Antique Bust of Homer.

1793.

KINSMAN beloved, and as a son, by me!
  When I behold this fruit of thy regard,
  The sculptured form of my old favourite bard,
I reverence feel for him, and love for thee.
Joy too and grief. Much joy that there should be
  Wise men and learn'd, who grudge not to reward
  With some applause my bold attempt and hard,
Which others scorn: critics by courtesy.
The grief is this, that sunk in Homer's mine,
  I lose my precious years now soon to fail,
Handling his gold, which howsoe'er it shine,
  Proves dross, when balanced in the Christian scale.
Be wiser thou—like our forefather DONNE,
Seek heavenly wealth, and work for God alone.

SONNET TO WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ.

1793.

Dear architect of fine Chateaux in air,
  Worthier to stand for ever if they could,
  Than any built of stone, or yet of wood,
For back of royal elephant to bear!

O for permission from the skies to share,
  Much to my own, though little to thy good,
  With thee, (not subject to the jealous mood!)
A partnership of literary ware!

But I am bankrupt now; and doom'd henceforth
  To drudge, in descant dry, on others' lays;
Bards, I acknowledge, of unequall'd worth!
  But what is commentator's happiest praise?

That he has furnish'd lights for other eyes,
Which they, who need them, use, and then despise.

SONNET TO DR. AUSTIN.

1792.

Austin! accept a grateful verse from me,
The poet's treasure, no inglorious fee.
Loved by the Muses, thy ingenuous mind
Pleasing requital in my verse may find;
Verse oft has dash'd the scythe of Time aside,
Immortalizing names which else had died.

And oh! could I command the glittering wealth
With which sick kings are glad to purchase health;
Yet, if extensive fame, and sure to live,
Were in the power of verse like mine to give,
I would not recompense his art with less,
Who, giving Mary health, heals my distress.
Friend of my friend!* I love thee, though unknown,
And boldly call thee, being his, my own.

SONNET TO GEORGE ROMNEY, ESQ.

On his Picture of me in Crayons, drawn at Eartham, in the 61*st Year of my Age, in the Months of August and September.*

1792.

ROMNEY, expert infallibly to trace
On chart or canvas, not the form alone
And semblance, but, however faintly shown,
The mind's impression too on every face—

With strokes that time ought never to erase
Thou hast so pencill'd mine, that though I own
The subject worthless, I have never known
The artist shining with superior grace.

* Hayley.

But this I mark—that symptoms none of woe
  In thy incomparable work appear.
Well—I am satisfied it should be so,
  Since, on maturer thought, the cause is clear;

For in my looks what sorrow couldst thou see
When I was Hayley's guest, and sat to Thee?

SONNET TO MRS. UNWIN.

1793.

Mary! I want a lyre with other strings, [drew,
  Such aid from Heaven as some have feign'd they
  An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
And undebased by praise of meaner things,
That ere through age or wo I shed my wings,
  I may record thy worth with honour due,
  In verse as musical as thou art true,
And that immortalizes whom it sings.

But thou hast little need. There is a book
  By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
  A chronicle of actions just and bright;

There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine,
And, since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

TO MARY.

AUTUMN OF 1793.

THE twentieth year is well nigh past,
Since first our sky was overcast,
Ah would that this might be the last!
My Mary!

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
I see thee daily weaker grow—
'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary!

Thy needles, once a shining store,
For my sake restless heretofore,
Now rust disused, and shine no more,
My Mary!

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
The same kind office for me still,
Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary!

But well thou play'dst the housewife's part,
And all thy threads with magic art
Have wound themselves about this heart,
My Mary!

Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language utter'd in a dream;
Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,
My Mary!

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
Are still more lovely in my sight
Than golden beams of orient light,
My Mary!

For could I view nor them nor thee,
What sight worth seeing could I see?
The sun would rise in vain for me,
My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,
Thy hands their little force resign;
Yet gently press'd, press gently mine,
My Mary!

Such feebleness of limbs thou provest,
That now at every step thou movest
Upheld by two, yet still thou lovest,
My Mary!

And still to love, though press'd with ill,
In wintry age to feel no chill,
With me is to be lovely still,
My Mary!

But ah! by constant heed I know,
How oft the sadness that I show,
Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
My Mary!

And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past,
Thy worn-out heart will break at last,
My Mary!

ON

THE DEATH

OF

MRS. THROCKMORTON'S BULFINCH.

YE nymphs! if e'er your eyes were red
With tears o'er hapless favourites shed,
O share Maria's grief!
Her favourite, even in his cage,
(What will not hunger's cruel rage?)
Assassin'd by a thief.

Where Rhenus strays his vine among,
The egg was laid from which he sprung,
And though by nature mute,
Or only with a whistle bless'd,
Well-taught he all the sounds express'd
Of flagelet or flute.

The honours of his ebon poll
Were brighter than the sleekest mole,
His bosom of the hue
With which Aurora decks the skies,
When piping winds shall soon arise,
To sweep away the dew.

Above, below, in all the house,
Dire foe alike of bird and mouse,
No cat had leave to dwell;
And Bully's cage supported stood
On props of smoothest-shaven wood,
Large-built and latticed well.

Well-latticed—but the grate, alas!
Not rough with wire of steel or brass,
For Bully's plumage sake,
But smooth with wands from Ouse's side,
With which, when neatly peel'd and dried,
The swains their baskets make.

Night veil'd the pole: all seem'd secure:
When led by instinct sharp and sure,
Subsistence to provide,
A beast forth sallied on the scout,
Long-back'd, long-tail'd, with whiker'd snout,
And badger-colour'd hide.

He, entering at the study-door,
Its ample area 'gan explore;
And something in the wind
Conjectured, sniffing round and round,
Better than all the books he found,
Food chiefly for the mind.

Just then, by adverse fate impress'd,
A dream disturb'd poor Bully's rest;
In sleep he seem'd to view
A rat fast-clinging to the cage,
And, screaming at the sad presage,
Awoke and found it true.

For, aided both by ear and scent,
Right to his mark the monster went—
Ah, muse! forbear to speak
Minute the horrours that ensued;
His teeth were strong, the cage was wood—
He left poor Bully's beak.

O had he made that too his prey!
That beak, whence issued many a lay
Of such mellifluous tone,
Might have repaid him well, I wote,
For silencing so sweet a throat,
Fast stuck within his own.

Maria weeps—the Muses mourn—
So, when by Bacchanalians torn,
On Thracian Hebrus' side
The tree-enchanter Orpheus fell,
His head alone remain'd to tell
The cruel death he died.

THE

POET'S NEW-YEAR'S-GIFT.

TO MRS. THROCKMORTON.

MARIA! I have every good
For thee wish'd many a time,
Both sad and in a cheerful mood,
But never yet in rhyme.

To wish thee fairer is no need,
More prudent or more sprightly,
Or more ingenious, or more freed
From temper-flaws unsightly.

What favour then not yet possess'd
Can I for thee require,
In wedded love already bless'd,
To thy whole heart's desire?

None here is happy but in part;
Full bliss is bliss divine:
There dwells some wish in every heart,
And doubtless one in thine.

That wish, on some fair future day,
Which Fate shall brightly gild,
('Tis blameless, be it what it may,)
I wish it all fulfill'd.

TO

MRS. THROCKMORTON.

ON HER BEAUTIFUL TRANSCRIPT OF HORACE'S ODE

AD LIBRUM SUUM.

FEBRUARY, 1790.

MARIA, could Horace have guess'd
  What honour awaited his ode,
To his own little volume address'd,
  The honour which you have bestow'd:
Who have traced it in characters here,
  So elegant, even, and neat,
He had laugh'd at the critical sneer
  Which he seems to have trembled to meet.

And sneer, if you please, he had said,
  A nymph shall hereafter arise,
Who shall give me, when you are all dead,
  The glory your malice denies;
Shall dignity give to my lay,
  Although but a mere bagatelle;
And even a poet shall say,
  Nothing ever was written so well.

CATHARINA.

TO MRS. STAPLETON, (NOW MRS. COURTNAY.)

SHE came—she is gone—we have met—
And meet perhaps never again;
The sun of that moment is set,
And seems to have risen in vain,
Catharina has fled like a dream—
(So vanishes pleasure, alas!)
But has left a regret and esteem
That will not so suddenly pass.

The last evening ramble we made,
Catharina, Maria, and I,
Our progress was often delay'd
By the nightingale warbling nigh.
We paused under many a tree,
And much she was charm'd with a tone
Less sweet to Maria and me,
Who so lately had witness'd her own.

My numbers that day she had sung,
And gave them a grace so divine,
As only her musical tongue
Could infuse into numbers of mine.

The longer I heard, I esteem'd
  The work of my fancy the more,
And e'en to myself never seem'd
  So tuneful a poet before.

Though the pleasures of London exceed
  In number the days of the year,
Catharina, did nothing impede,
  Would feel herself happier here;
For the close-woven arches of limes
  On the banks of our river, I know,
Are sweeter to her many times
  Than aught that the city can show.

So it is, when the mind is endued
  With a well-judging taste from above,
Then, whether embellish'd or rude,
  'Tis nature alone that we love.
The achievements of art may amuse,
  May even our wonder excite,
But groves, hills, and valleys diffuse
  A lasting, a sacred delight.

Since then in the rural recess
  Catharina alone can rejoice,
May it still be her lot to possess
  The scene of her sensible choice!
To inhabit a mansion remote
  From the clatter of street-pacing steeds,
And by Philomel's annual note
  To measure the life that she leads.

With her book, and her voice, and her lyre,
  To wing all her moments at home,
And with scenes that new rapture inspire,
  As oft as it suits her to roam,
She will have just the life she prefers,
  With little to hope or to fear,
And ours would be pleasant as hers,
  Might we view her enjoying it here.

CATHARINA:

SECOND PART.

On her Marriage to George Courtnay, Esq.

1792.

BELIEVE it or not, as you chuse,
  The doctrine is certainly true,
That the future is known to the muse,
  And poets are oracles too.
I did but express a desire
  To see Catharina at home,
At the side of my friend George's fire,
  And lo—she is actually come.

Such prophecy some may despise,
  But the wish of a poet and friend
Perhaps is approved in the skies,
  And therefore attains to its end.
'Twas a wish that flew ardently forth
  From a bosom effectually warm'd
With the talents, the graces, and worth
  Of the person for whom it was form'd.

Maria* would leave us, I knew,
  To the grief and regret of us all,
But less to our grief, could we view
  Catharina the queen of the hall:

* Lady Throckmorton.

And therefore I wish'd as I did,
  And therefore this union of hands;
Not a whisper was heard to forbid,
  But all cry—Amen—to the bans.

Since therefore I seem to incur
  No danger of wishing in vain,
When making good wishes for her,
  I will e'en to my wishes again—
With one I have made her a wife,
  And now I will try with another,
Which I cannot suppress for my life—
  How soon I can make her a mother.

GRATITUDE.

ADDRESSED TO LADY HESKETH.

1786.

This cap, that so stately appears,
With ribbon-bound tassel on high,
Which seems by the crest that it rears
Ambitious of brushing the sky:
This cap to my cousin I owe;
She gave it, and gave me beside,
Wreathed into an elegant bow,
The ribbon with which it is tied.

This wheel-footed studying chair,
Contrived both for toil and repose,
Wide-elbow'd, and wadded with hair,
In which I both scribble and doze,
Bright-studded to dazzle the eyes,
And rival in lustre of that
In which, or Astronomy lies,
Fair Cassiopeïa sat:

These carpets, so soft to the foot,
Caledonia's traffic and pride!
Oh spare them, ye knights of the boot,
Escaped from a cross-country-ride!
This table and mirror within,
Secure from collision and dust,
At which I oft shave cheek and chin,
And periwig nicely adjust:

This moveable structure of shelves,
For its beauty admired and its use,
And charged with octavos and twelves,
The gayest I had to produce ;
Where, flaming in scarlet and gold,
My poems enchanted I view,
And hope, in due time, to behold
My Iliad and Odyssey too :

This china, that decks the alcove,
Which here people call a boufet,
But what the gods call it above
Has ne'er been reveal'd to us yet :
These curtains, that keep the room warm,
Or cool, as the season demands,
Those stoves, that for pattern and form,
Seem the labour of Mulciber's hands :

All these are not half that I owe
To one, from our earliest youth
To me ever ready to show
Benignity, friendship, and truth ;
For Time, the destroyer, declared,
And foe of our perishing kind,
If even her face he has spared,
Much less could he alter her mind.

Thus compass'd about with the goods
And chattels of leisure and ease,
I indulge my poetical moods
In many such fancies as these ;

And fancies I fear they will seem—
Poets' goods are not often so fine;
The poets will swear that I dream,
When I sing of the splendour of mine.

TO MY COUSIN,

ANNE BODHAM,

ON

RECEIVING FROM HER A NETWORK PURSE, MADE BY HERSELF.

1793.

My gentle Anne, whom heretofore,
When I was young, and thou no more
Than plaything for a nurse,
I danced and fondled on my knee,
A kitten both in size and glee,
I thank thee for my purse.

Gold pays the worth of all things here;
But not of love;—that gem 's too dear
For richest rogues to win it;
I, therefore, as a proof of love,
Esteem thy present far above
The best things kept within it.

TO MRS. KING.

On her kind Present to the Author, a Patch-work Counterpane of her own making.

1790.

The Bard, if e'er he feel at all,
Must sure be quicken'd by a call
Both on his heart and head,
To pay with tuneful thanks the care
And kindness of a lady fair
Who deigns to deck his bed.

A bed like this, in ancient time,
On Ida's barren top sublime,
(As Homer's epic shows,)
Composed of sweetest vernal flowers,
Without the aid of sun or showers,
For Jove and Juno rose.

Less beautiful, however gay,
Is that which in the scorching day
Receives the weary swain,
Who, laying his long scythe aside,
Sleeps on some bank with daisies pied,
Till roused to toil again.

What labours of the loom I see!
Looms numberless have groan'd for me!
Should every maiden come
To scramble for the patch that bears
The impress of the robe she wears,
The bell would toll for some.

And oh, what havoc would ensue!
This bright display of every hue
All in a moment fled!
As if a storm should strip the bowers
Of all their tendrils, leaves, and flowers—
Each pocketing a shred.

Thanks, then, to every gentle fair,
Who will not come to peck me bare
As bird of borrow'd feather,
And thanks to one, above them all,
The gentle fair of Pertenhall,
Who put the whole together.

TO LADY AUSTEN.

1781.

Dear Anna—between friend and friend,
Prose answers every common end;
Serves, in a plain and homely way,
To express the occurrence of the day;
Our health, the weather, and the news;
What walks we take, what books we chuse;
And all the floating thoughts we find
Upon the surface of the mind.
But when a poet takes the pen,
Far more alive than other men,
He feels a gentle tingling come
Down to his finger and his thumb,
Derived from nature's noblest part,
The centre of a glowing heart:
And this is what the World, who knows
No flights above the pitch of prose,
His more sublime vagaries slighting,
Denominates an itch for writing.
No wonder I, who scribble rhyme
To catch the triflers of the time,
And tell them truths divine and clear,
Which, couch'd in prose, they will not hear;
Who labour hard to allure and draw
The loiterers I never saw,
Should feel that itching, and that tingling,
With all my purpose intermingling,

To your intrinsic merit true,
When call'd to address myself to you.
  Mysterious are His ways, whose power
Brings forth that unexpected hour,
When minds, that never met before,
Shall meet, unite, and part no more:
It is the allotment of the skies,
The hand of the Supremely Wise,
That guides and governs our affections,
And plans and orders our connexions;
Directs us in our distant road,
And marks the bounds of our abode.
Thus we were settled when you found us,
Peasants and children all around us,
Not dreaming of so dear a friend,
Deep in the abyss of Silver-End.*
Thus Martha, e'en against her will,
Perch'd on the top of yonder hill;
And you, though you must needs prefer
The fairer scenes of sweet Sancerre,†
Are come from distant Loire, to choose
A cottage on the banks of Ouse.
This page of Providence quite new,
And now just opening to our view,
Employs our present thoughts and pains,
To guess and spell what it contains:

* An obscure part of Olney, adjoining to the residence of Cowper, which faced the market-place.

† Lady Austen's residence in France.

But day by day, and year by year,
Will make the dark enigma clear;
And furnish us, perhaps, at last,
Like other scenes already past,
With proof, that we and our affairs
Are part of a Jehovah's cares:
For God unfolds, by slow degrees,
The purport of his deep decrees;
Sheds every hour a clearer light
In aid of our defective sight;
And spreads, at length, before the soul,
A beautiful and perfect whole,
Which busy man's inventive brain
Toils to anticipate in vain.
  Say, Anna, had you never known
The beauties of a rose full blown,
Could you, though luminous your eye,
By looking on the bud, descry,
Or guess, with a prophetic power,
The future splendour of the flower?
Just so the Omnipotent, who turns
The system of a world's concerns,
From mere minutiæ can educe
Events of most important use;
And bid a dawning sky display
The blaze of a meridian day.
The works of man, tend, one and all,
As needs they must, from great to small;
And vanity absorbs at length
The monuments of human strength.

But who can tell how vast the plan
Which this day's incident began?
Too small, perhaps, the slight occasion
For our dim-sighted observation;
It pass'd unnoticed, as the bird
That cleaves the yielding air unheard,
And yet may prove, when understood,
An harbinger of endless good.
  Not that I deem, or mean to call
Friendship a blessing cheap or small;
But merely to remark, that ours,
Like some of nature's sweetest flowers,
Rose from a seed of tiny size,
That seem'd to promise no such prize;
A transient visit intervening,
And made almost without a meaning,
(Hardly the effect of inclination,
Much less of pleasing expectation,)
Produced a friendship, then begun,
That has cemented us in one;
And placed it in our power to prove,
By long fidelity and love,
That Solomon has wisely spoken;
'A threefold cord is not soon broken.'

ON

MRS. MONTAGU'S FEATHER-HANGINGS.

THE Birds put off their every hue,
To dress a room for Montagu.
The Peacock sends his heavenly dyes,
His *rainbows* and his *starry eyes* ;
The Pheasant plumes, which round infold
His mantling neck with downy gold;
The Cock his arch'd tail's azure show;
And, river blanch'd, the Swan his snow.
All tribes beside of Indian name,
That glossy shine, or vivid flame,
Where rises and where sets the day,
Whate'er they boast of rich and gay,
Contribute to the gorgeous plan,
Proud to advance it all they can.
This plumage neither dashing shower,
Nor blasts that shake the dripping bower,
Shall drench again or discompose,
But screen'd from every storm that blows,
It boasts a splendour ever new,
Safe with protecting Montagu.
To the same patroness resort,
Secure of favour at her court,
Strong Genius, from whose forge of thought
Forms rise, to quick perfection wrought,
Which, though new-born, with vigour move,
Like Pallas springing arm'd from Jove—

Imagination scattering round
Wild roses over furrow'd ground,
Which Labour of his frown beguile,
And teach Philosophy a smile—
Wit flashing on Religion's side,
Whose fires, to sacred Truth applied,
The gem, though luminous before,
Obtrudes on human notice more,
Like sunbeams on the golden height
Of some tall temple playing bright—
Well-tutor'd Learning, from his books
Dismiss'd with grave, not haughty, looks,
Their order on his shelves exact,
Not more harmonious or compact
Than that, to which he keeps confined
The various treasures of his mind—
All these to Montagu's repair,
Ambitious of a shelter there.
There Genius, Learning, Fancy, Wit,
Their ruffled plumage calm refit,
(For stormy troubles loudest roar
Around their flight who highest soar,)
And in her eye, and by her aid,
Shine safe without a fear to fade.
She thus maintains divided sway
With yon bright regent of the day;
The Plume and Poet both we know,
Their lustre to his influence owe;
And she the works of Phœbus aiding,
Both Poet saves and Plume from fading.

TO AN

AFFLICTED PROTESTANT LADY

IN FRANCE.

MADAM,

A STRANGER'S purpose in these lays
Is to congratulate and not to praise.
To give the creature the Creator's due,
Were sin in me, and an offence to you.
From man to man, or e'en to woman paid,
Praise is the medium of a knavish trade,
A coin by Craft for folly's use design'd,
Spurious, and only current with the blind.
The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown;
No traveller ever reached that bless'd abode,
Who found not thorns and briers in his road.
The World may dance along the flowery plain,
Cheer'd as they go by many a sprightly strain;
Where Nature has her mossy velvet spread,
With unshod feet they yet securely tread;
Admonish'd, scorn the caution and the friend,
Bent all on pleasure, heedless of its end.
But He, who knew what human hearts would prove,
How slow to learn the dictates of his love,
That, hard by nature and of stubborn will,
A life of ease would make them harder still,

In pity to the souls his grace design'd
To rescue from the ruins of mankind,
Call'd for a cloud to darken all their years,
And said, 'Go spend them in the vale of tears.'
O balmy gales of soul-reviving air!
O salutary streams that murmur there!
These flowing from the Fount of Grace above,
Those breathed from lips of everlasting love.
The flinty soil indeed their feet annoys,
Chill blasts of trouble nip their springing joys,
An envious World will interpose its frown
To mar delights superior to its own,
And many a pang, experienced still within,
Reminds them of their hated inmate, Sin;
But ills of every shape and every name,
Transform'd to blessings, miss their cruel aim;
And every moment's calm that soothes the breast,
Is given in earnest of eternal rest.
   Ah, be not sad, although thy lot be cast
Far from the flock, and in a boundless waste!
No shepherd's tents within thy view appear,
But the chief Shepherd even there is near;
Thy tender sorrows and thy plaintive strain
Flow in a foreign land, but not in vain;
Thy tears all issue from a source divine,
And every drop bespeaks a Saviour thine—
So once in Gideon's fleece the dews were found,
And drought on all the drooping herbs around.

TO JOSEPH HILL, Esq.

Dear Joseph—five and twenty years ago—
Alas how time escapes!—'tis even so—
With frequent intercourse, and always sweet,
And always friendly, we were wont to cheat
A tedious hour—and now we never meet!
As some grave gentleman in Terence says,
('Twas therefore much the same in ancient days,)
Good lack, we know not what to-morrow brings—
Strange fluctuation of all human things!
True. Changes will befall, and friends may part,
But distance only cannot change the heart:
And, were I call'd to prove the assertion true,
One proof should serve—a reference to you.
Whence comes it then, that in the wane of life,
Though nothing have occurr'd to kindle strife,
We find the friends we fancied we had won,
Though numerous once, reduced to few or none?
Can gold grow worthless that has stood the touch?
No; gold they seem'd, but they were never such.
Horatio's servant once, with bow and cringe,
Swinging the parlour door upon its hinge,
Dreading a negative, and overaw'd
Lest he should trespass, begg'd to go abroad.

Go, fellow !—whither?—turning short about—
Nay. Stay at home—you're always going out.
'Tis but a step, Sir, just at the street's end.—
For what?—An please you, Sir, to see a friend.—
A friend! Horatio cried, and seem'd to start—
Yea marry shalt thou, and with all my heart.—
And fetch my cloak; for, though the night be raw,
I'll see him too—the first I ever saw.
  I knew the man, and knew his nature mild,
And was his plaything often when a child;
But somewhat at that moment pinch'd him close,
Else he was seldom bitter or morose.
Perhaps his confidence just then betray'd,
His grief might prompt him with the speech he made;
Perhaps 'twas mere good humour gave it birth,
The harmless play of pleasantry and mirth.
Howe'er it was, his language, in my mind,
Bespoke at least a man that knew mankind.
  But not to moralize too much, and strain,
To prove an evil of which all complain,
(I hate long arguments verbosely spun,)
One story more, dear Hill, and I have done.
Once on a time an emperor, a wise man,
No matter where, in China or Japan,
Decreed, that whosoever should offend
Against the well-known duties of a friend,
Convicted once, should ever after wear
But half a coat, and show his bosom bare.
The punishment importing this, no doubt,
That all was naught within, and all found out.

O happy Britain! we have not to fear,
Such hard and arbitrary measure here;
Else, could a law, like that which I relate,
Once have the sanction of our triple state,
Some few, that I have known in days of old,
Would run most dreadful risk of catching cold;
While you, my friend, whatever wind should blow,
Might traverse England safely to and fro,
An honest man, close-button'd to the chin,
Broad-cloth without, and a warm heart within.

TO THE REV. MR. NEWTON.

AN INVITATION INTO THE COUNTRY.

THE swallows in their torpid state
  Compose their useless wing,
And bees in hives as idly wait
  The call of early Spring.

The keenest frost that binds the stream,
  The wildest wind that blows,
Are neither felt nor fear'd by them,
  Secure of their repose.

But man, all feeling and awake,
  The gloomy scene surveys;
With present ills his heart must ake,
  And pant for brighter days.

Old Winter, halting o'er the mead,
  Bids me and Mary mourn;
But lovely Spring peeps o'er his head,
  And whispers your return.

Then April, with her sister May,
  Shall chase him from the bowers,
And weave fresh garlands every day,
  To crown the smiling hours.

And if a tear, that speaks regret,
  Of happier times, appear,
A glimpse of joy, that we have met,
  Shall shine, and dry the tear.

TO THE REV. MR. NEWTON,

ON HIS RETURN FROM RAMSGATE.—OCTOBER, 1780.

THAT ocean you have late survey'd,
Those rocks I too have seen,
But I, afflicted and dismay'd,
You tranquil and serene.

You from the flood-controlling steep,
Saw stretch'd before your view,
With conscious joy, the threatening deep,
No longer such to you.

To me, the waves that ceaseless broke
Upon the dangerous coast,
Hoarsely and ominously spoke
Of all my treasure lost.

Your sea of troubles you have pass'd,
And found the peaceful shore;
I, tempest-toss'd, and wreck'd at last,
Come home to port no more.

TO THE REV. W. CAWTHORNE UNWIN.

UNWIN, I should but ill repay
The kindness of a friend,
Whose worth deserves as warm a lay
As ever Friendship penn'd,
Thy name omitted in a page,
That would reclaim a vicious age.

A union form'd, as mine with thee,
  Not rashly, nor in sport,
May be as fervent in degree,
  And faithful in its sort,
And may as rich in comfort prove,
As that of true fraternal love.

The bud inserted in the rind,
  The bud of peach or rose,
Adorns, though differing in its kind,
  The stock whereon it grows,
With flower as sweet, or fruit as fair,
As if produced by Nature there.

Not rich, I render what I may,
  I seize thy name in haste,
And place it in this first essay,
  Lest this should prove the last.
'Tis where it should be—in a plan
That holds in view the good of man.

The poet's lyre, to fix his fame,
  Should be the poet's heart;
Affection lights a brighter flame
  Than ever blazed by art.
No Muses on these lines attend,
I sink the poet in the friend.

TO A YOUNG FRIEND,

ON HIS ARRIVING AT CAMBRIDGE WET, WHEN NO RAIN HAD FALLEN THERE.—1793.

If Gideon's fleece, which drench'd with dew he found,
While moisture none refresh'd the herbs around,
Might fitly represent the Church, endow'd
With heavenly gifts, to Heathens not allow'd;
In pledge, perhaps, of favours from on high,
Thy locks were wet when others' locks were dry.
Heaven grant us half the omen—may we see
Not drought on others, but much dew on thee!

ON THE BURNING OF LORD MANSFIELD'S LIBRARY, TOGETHER WITH HIS MSS.

BY THE MOB, IN THE MONTH OF JUNE, 1780.

So then—the Vandals of our isle,
Sworn foes to sense and law,
Have burnt to dust a nobler pile
Than ever Roman saw!

And Murray sighs o'er Pope and Swift,
And many a treasure more,
The well-judged purchase and the gift,
That graced his letter'd store.

Their pages mangled, burnt, and torn,
The loss was *his alone*;
But ages yet to come shall mourn
The burning of *his own*.

ON THE SAME.

When Wit and Genius meet their doom,
In all-devouring flame,
They tell us of the fate of Rome,
And bid us fear the same.

O'er Murray's loss the Muses wept,
They felt the rude alarm,
Yet bless'd the guardian care that kept
His sacred head from harm.

There Memory, like the bee, that's fed
From Flora's balmy store,
The quintessence of all he read
Had treasured up before.

The lawless herd, with fury blind,
Have done him cruel wrong;
The flowers are gone—but still we find
The honey on his tongue.

ON THE

PROMOTION OF EDWARD THURLOW, Esq.

TO THE LORD HIGH CHANCELLORSHIP OF ENGLAND.

ROUND Thurlow's head in early youth,
And in his sportive days,
Fair Science pour'd the light of truth,
And Genius shed his rays.

See! with united wonder cried
The experienced and the sage,
Ambition in a boy supplied
With all the skill of age!

Discernment, eloquence, and grace
Proclaim him born to sway
The balance in the highest place,
And bear the palm away.

The praise bestow'd was just and wise;
He sprang impetuous forth,
Secure of conquest, where the prize
Attends superior worth.

So the best courser on the plain
Ere yet he starts is known,
And does but at the goal obtain
What all had deem'd his own.

THE DIVERTING HISTORY

OF

JOHN GILPIN;

Showing how he went farther than he intended, and came safe home again.

JOHN GILPIN was a citizen
  Of credit and renown,
A train-band captain eke was he
  Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear,
  Though wedded we have been
These twice ten tedious years, yet we
  No holiday have seen.

To-morrow is our wedding-day,
  And we will then repair
Unto the Bell at Edmonton
  All in a chaise and pair.

My sister, and my sister's child,
  Myself and children three,
Will fill the chaise; so you must ride
  On horseback after we.

He soon replied, I do admire
  Of womankind but one,
And you are she, my dearest dear,
  Therefore it shall be done.

I am a linen-draper bold,
  As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the calender
  Will lend his horse to go.

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin, That's well said;
  And for that wine is dear,
We will be furnish'd with our own,
  Which is both bright and clear.

John Gilpin kiss'd his loving wife;
  O'erjoy'd was he to find,
That, though on pleasure she was bent,
  She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
  But yet was not allow'd
To drive up to the door, lest all
  Should say that she was proud:

So three doors off the chaise was stay'd,
  Where they did all get in;
Six precious souls, and all agog
  To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
  Were never folk so glad,
The stones did rattle underneath,
  As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse's side
  Seized fast the flowing mane,
And up he got, in haste to ride,
  But soon came down again;

For saddle-tree scarce reach'd had he,
  His journey to begin,
When, turning round his head, he saw
  Three customers come in.

So down he came; for loss of time,
  Although it grieved him sore,
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,
  Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the customers,
  Were suited to their mind,
When Betty screaming came down stairs,
  The wine is left behind!

Good lack! quoth he—yet bring it me,
  My leathern belt likewise,
In which I bear my trusty sword,
  When I do exercise.

Now mistress Gilpin (careful soul!)
Had two stone bottles found,
To hold the liquor that she loved,
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
Through which the belt he drew,
And hung a bottle on each side,
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be
Equipp'd from top to toe,
His long red cloak, well brush'd and neat,
He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again
Upon his nimble steed,
Full slowly pacing o'er the stones,
With caution and good heed.

But finding soon a smoother road
Beneath his well-shod feet,
The snorting beast began to trot,
Which gall'd him in his seat.

So, fair and softly, John he cried,
But John he cried in vain;
That trot became a gallop soon,
In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs he must,
Who cannot sit upright,
He grasp'd the mane with both his hands,
And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that sort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or naught;
Away went hat and wig;
He little dreamt, when he set out,
Of running such a rig.

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
Like streamer long and gay,
Till, loop and button failing both,
At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern
The bottles he had slung;
A bottle swinging at each side,
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children scream'd,
Up flew the windows all;
And every soul cried out, Well done!
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he;
His fame soon spread around;
He carries weight! he rides a race!
'Tis for a thousand pound!

And still, as fast as he drew near,
'Twas wonderful to view,
How in a trice the turnpike men
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were shatter'd at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,
Most piteous to be seen,
Which made his horse's flanks to smoke,
As they had basted been.

But still he seem'd to carry weight,
With leathern girdle braced;
For all might see the bottle-necks,
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington
These gambols he did play,
Until he came unto the Wash
Of Edmonton so gay;

And there he threw the wash about
  On both sides of the way,
Just like unto a trundling mop,
  Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton his loving wife
  From the balcony spied
Her tender husband, wondering much
  To see how he did ride.

Stop, stop, John Gilpin!—Here's the house—
  They all aloud did cry;
The dinner waits, and we are tired:
  Said Gilpin—So am I!

But yet his horse was not a whit
  Inclined to tarry there;
For why?—his owner had a house
  Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,
  Shot by an archer strong;
So did he fly—which brings me to
  The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin out of breath,
  And sore against his will,
Till at his friend the calender's
  His horse at last stood still.

The calender, amazed to see
His neighbour in such trim,
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
And thus accosted him:

What news? what news? your tidings tell?
Tell me you must and shall—
Say why bareheaded you are come,
Or why you come at all?

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,
And loved a timely joke;
And thus unto the calender
In merry guise he spoke:

I came because your horse would come;
And, if I well forebode,
My hat and wig will soon be here,
They are upon the road.

The calender, right glad to find
His friend in merry pin,
Return'd him not a single word,
But to the house went in:

When straight he came with hat and wig;
A wig that flow'd behind,
A hat not much the worse for wear,
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and in his turn
  Thus show'd his ready wit—
My head is twice as big as yours,
  They therefore needs must fit.

But let me scrape the dirt away
  That hangs upon your face;
And stop and eat, for well you may
  Be in a hungry case.

Said John, it is my wedding-day,
  And all the world would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton,
  And I should dine at Ware.

So turning to his horse, he said,
  I am in haste to dine;
'Twas for your pleasure you came here,
  You shall go back for mine.

Ah luckless speech, and bootless boast!
  For which he paid full dear;
For, while he spake, a braying ass
  Did sing most loud and clear;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he
  Had heard a lion roar,
And gallop'd off with all his might,
  As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away
  Went Gilpin's hat and wig:
He lost them sooner than at first;
  For why?—they were too big.

Now mistress Gilpin, when she saw
  Her husband posting down
Into the country far away,
  She pull'd out half a crown;

And thus unto the youth she said,
  That drove them to the Bell,
This shall be yours, when you bring back
  My husband safe and well.

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
  John coming back amain;
Whom in a trice he tried to stop,
  By catching at his rein:

But not performing what he meant,
  And gladly would have done,
The frighted steed he frighted more,
  And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
  Went postboy at his heels,
The postboy's horse right glad to miss
  The lumbering of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road,
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With postboy scampering in the rear,
They raised the hue and cry:—

Stop thief! stop thief!—a highwayman!
Not one of them was mute;
And all and each that pass'd that way
Did join in the pursuit.

And now the turnpike gates again
Flew open in short space;
The toll-men thinking as before,
That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,
For he got first to town;
Nor stopp'd till where he had got up
He did again get down.

Now let us sing, long live the king,
And Gilpin, long live he;
And, when he next doth ride abroad,
May I be there to see!

THE YEARLY DISTRESS;

OR,

TITHING-TIME AT STOCK IN ESSEX.

Verses addressed to a Country Clergyman, complaining of the disagreeableness of the Day annually appointed for receiving the Dues at the Parsonage.

Come, ponder well, for 'tis no jest,
To laugh it would be wrong;
The troubles of a worthy priest
The burden of my song.

The priest he merry is and blithe
Three quarters of the year,
But oh! it cuts him like a scythe
When tithing-time draws near.

He then is full of frights and fears,
As one at point to die,
And long before the day appears
He heaves up many a sigh.

For then the farmers come, jog, jog,
  Along the miry road,
Each heart as heavy as a log,
  To make their payments good.

In sooth, the sorrow of such days
  Is not to be express'd,
When he that takes and he that pays
  Are both alike distress'd.

Now all unwelcome at his gates
  The clumsy swains alight,
With rueful faces and bald pates—
  He trembles at the sight.

And well he may, for well he knows
  Each bumpkin of the clan,
Instead of paying what he owes,
  Will cheat him if he can.

So in they come—each makes his leg,
  And flings his head before,
And looks as if he came to beg,
  And not to quit a score.

'And how does miss and madam do,
  The little boy and all?'
'All tight and well. And how do you,
  Good Mr. What-d'ye-call?'

The dinner comes, and down they sit:
 Were e'er such hungry folk?
There's little talking, and no wit;
 It is no time to joke.

One wipes his nose upon his sleeve,
 One spits upon the floor,
Yet, not to give offence or grieve,
 Holds up the cloth before.

The punch goes round, and they are dull
 And lumpish still as ever;
Like barrels with their bellies full,
 They only weigh the heavier.

At length the busy time begins,
 'Come, neighbours, we must wag.'—
The money chinks, down drop their chins,
 Each lugging out his bag.

One talks of mildew and of frost,
 And one of storms of hail,
And one of pigs that he has lost
 By maggots at the tail.

Quoth one, 'A rarer man than you
 In pulpit none shall hear;
But yet, methinks, to tell you true,
 You sell it plaguy dear.'

O why are farmers made so coarse,
  Or clergy made so fine?
A kick, that scarce would move a horse,
  May kill a sound divine.

Then let the boobies stay at home;
  'Twould cost him, I dare say,
Less trouble taking twice the sum,
  Without the clowns that pay.

ON THE

QUEEN'S VISIT TO LONDON,

THE NIGHT OF THE 17TH MARCH, 1789.

WHEN, long sequester'd from his throne,
George took his seat again,
By right of worth, not blood alone,
Entitled here to reign.

Then, Loyalty, with all his lamps
New-trimm'd, a gallant show!
Chasing the darkness and the damps,
Set London in a glow.

'Twas hard to tell, of streets or squares,
Which form'd the chief display,
These most resembling cluster'd stars,
Those the long milky way.

Bright shone the roofs, the domes, the spires,
And rockets flew, self-driven,
To hang their momentary fires
Amid the vault of heaven.

So fire with water to compare,
The ocean serves, on high
Up-spouted by a whale in air,
To express unwieldy joy.

Had all the pageants of the world
In one procession join'd,
And all the banners been unfurl'd
That heralds e'er design'd;

For no such sight had England's Queen
Forsaken her retreat,
Where, George recover'd made a scene
Sweet always, doubly sweet.

Yet glad she came that night to prove,
A witness undescried,
How much the object of her love
Was loved by all beside.

Darkness the skies had mantled o'er
In aid of her design——
Darkness, O Queen! ne'er call'd before
To veil a deed of thine!

On borrow'd wheels away she flies,
Resolved to be unknown,
And gratify no curious eyes
That night, except her own.

Arrived, a night like noon she sees,
And hears the million hum;
As all by instinct, like the bees,
Had known their sovereign come.

Pleased she beheld aloft portray'd
On many a splendid wall,
Emblems of health and heavenly aid,
And George the theme of all.

Unlike the enigmatic line,
So difficult to spell,
Which shook Belshazzar at his wine
The night his city fell.

Soon watery grew her eyes and dim,
But with a joyful tear,
None else, except in prayer for him,
George ever drew from her.

It was a scene in every part
Like those in fable feign'd,
And seem'd by some magician's art
Created and sustain'd.

But other magic there, she knew,
Had been exerted none,
To raise such wonders in her view,
Save love of George alone.

That cordial thought her spirits cheer'd,
And through the cumberous throng,
Not else unworthy to be fear'd,
Convey'd her calm along.

So, ancient poets say, serene
The sea-maid rides the waves,
And fearless of the billowy scene
Her peaceful bosom laves.

With more than astronomic eyes
She view'd the sparkling show;
One Georgian star adorns the skies,
She myriads found below.

Yet let the glories of a night
Like that, once seen, suffice,
Heaven grant us no such future sight,
Such previous wo the price!

ANNUS MEMORABILIS, 1789.

WRITTEN IN COMMEMORATION OF HIS MAJESTY'S HAPPY RECOVERY.

I RANSACK'D, for a theme of song,
Much ancient chronicle, and long;
I read of bright embattled fields,
Of trophied helmets, spears, and shields,
Of chiefs, whose single arm could boast
Prowess to dissipate a host:
Through tomes of fable and of dream,
I sought an eligible theme,
But none I found, or found them shared
Already by some happier bard.
  To modern times, with Truth to guide
My busy search, I next applied;
Here cities won and fleets dispersed
Urged loud a claim to be rehearsed,
Deeds of unperishing renown,
Our fathers' triumphs, and our own.
  Thus, as the bee, from bank to bower,
Assiduous sips at every flower,
But rests on none, till that be found,
Where most nectareous sweets abound,
So I from theme to theme display'd
In many a page historic stray'd,
Siege after siege, fight after fight,
Contemplating with small delight,

(For feats of sanguinary hue
Not always glitter in my view ;)
Till, settling on the current year,
I found the far-sought treasure near;
A theme for poetry divine,
A theme to ennoble even mine,
In memorable eighty-nine.
  The spring of eighty-nine shall be
An æra cherish'd long by me,
Which joyful I will oft record,
And thankful at my frugal board;
For then the clouds of eighty-eight,
That threaten'd England's trembling state
With loss of what she least could spare,
Her sovereign's tutelary care,
One breath of Heaven, that cried—Restore!
Chased, never to assemble more;
And far the richest crown on earth,
If valued by its wearer's worth,
The symbol of a righteous reign,
Sat fast on George's brows again.
  Then peace and joy again possess'd
Our Queen's long agitated breast,
Such joy and peace as can be known
By sufferers like herself alone;
Who losing, or supposing lost,
The good on earth they valued most,
For that dear sorrow's sake forego
All hope of happiness below,

Then suddenly regain the prize,
And flash thanksgivings to the skies!
O Queen of Albion, queen of isles!
Since all thy tears were changed to smiles,
The eyes that never saw thee shine
With joy not unallied to thine,
Transports not chargeable with art
Illume the land's remotest part,
And strangers to the air of courts,
Both in their toils and at their sports,
The happiness of answer'd prayers,
That gilds thy features, show in theirs.
If they, who on thy state attend,
Awe-struck, before thy presence bend,
'Tis but the natural effect
Of grandeur that ensures respect;
But she is something more than Queen,
Who is beloved where never seen.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.